



"Laulani Teale" <laulani@graffiti.net> on 01/08/2008 05:39:09 PM

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COMMENT OF LAULANI TEALE ON DRAFT REPOSITORY SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT AND DRAFT NEVADA RAIL CORRIDOR/ALIGNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT

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Aloha Kakou,

My name is Laulani Teale. I am a Kanaka Maoli (native Hawaiian) cultural practitioner from Kane'ohe, O'ahu, Hawai'i. [I am writing today to join my voice with the many others who are requesting that there be no nuclear disposal or transportation in the sacred area of Yucca Mountain.]

I speak for myself, though I know that many with whom I work and study have the same knowledge that I do and would also support the protection of the mountain.

I am a the coordinator of the Hawaiian Peacemaking Project for Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation and the Native Hawaiian Bar Association, and a facilitator for EPIC 'Ohana Conferencing, an intervention into Child Welfare Service cases. In my work with Kanaka Maoli families, I have seen again and again the relationship between the health of the land and the physical, mental, and spiritual health of the people who are connected with that land. This is true of all peoples, but especially of native populations, whose relationship to their sacred places is an integral part of their ability to function in a healthy way. For us, the well-being of the 'aina is truly a matter of life and death.

I am also an advanced student of la'au lapa'au (Kanaka Maoli herbal medicine). I studied with master healer Papa Henry Alan Auwae for five years, and since his passing in 2001 I have had six years of reflective study on my own. I have witnessed the healing of many patients, including terminal cancer patients, through native medicine. This medical practice relies on a strong relationship to God and nature, the living practice of traditional knowledge, and -- very importantly -- the gathering of good-quality herbs, waters and minerals from specific places.

2 [I am very concerned that the proposed nuclear storage will have a very serious impact on the resources that native healers of the area need for their work.]

Many of the patients whom I saw healed were not of native Hawaiian ancestry. From my experience, I believe that true healers do not discriminate in whom they help, but respond when called upon. Therefore, it is not only the native population which suffers the effects of contamination, but all who might be helped by this medicine. There are many alive today whose health was restored through these cultural practices, and many more who will need the help of native healers in the future. Without good, clean resources for all of the generations to come, the power of these practices will not be available to those who need this healing.

2  
cont

[The sacred waters of the mountain must be protected. Simple logic tells us that when a contaminant is stored near a great aquifer, it is only a matter of time before that water will be contaminated. For the sake of the love we all share for our collective descendants in all the generations to come, I ask that you not bury nuclear waste near this water.]

1  
cont

[The real solution is to cease the production of nuclear waste altogether. There is no such thing as safe or clean disposal, and this needs to be understood. It is myopic to believe otherwise, and shows a disregard for the long-term health of humanity and the planet.]

I wish you the best in health and understanding; may your decision be blessed by the love of our sacred Mother Earth.

Aloha me ka Oia'i'o,

Laulani Teale

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